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Brunswick, Georgia, is a coastal city of the Deep South. It is 174 miles from Albany where thousands of Negroes marched to jail in the summer of 1962 protesting intolerable conditions. At the same time Brunswick was quietly negotiating the desegregation of its lunch counters. While racial tension broke out in other neighboring communities, Brunswick also succeeded in desegregating city and county recreational facilities, negotiating the first voluntary school desegregation in the Deep South, and making headway on civil rights law compliance, including hospital desegregation. Racial rapprochements were achieved in Brunswick before the summer of 1964 without a single street demonstration or boycott, and without a law suit instigated by Negroes.

Brunswick's success in reconciling conflicting ideas and issues has been specifically attributable to three factors. First, there have been a realistic recognition, on both sides, of enmities and prejudices and an unshakable desire to avoid notoriety in race relations. The existence of a biracial committee through which change might be effectively and acceptably channeled is a second important factor. Finally, the pushing of aspirations by the Rev. Julius Caesar Hope and associated Negro leaders through a concerted strategy has kept demonstrations, boycotts, court suits, and the like from being employed and has, at the same time, kept these effective weapons poised and ready for use if the need arises.

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SPECIAL REPORT

SOUTHERN REGIONAL COUNCIL

5 Forsyth Street, N.W., Atlanta 3, Georgia

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37

Bennett O. Stalvey

B R U N S W I C K

BY

PAT WATTERS

SEPTEMBER, 1964

Office of Education-EEOP
Research and Materials Branch

This is the fourth in a series of Special Reports that seek to give an accurate view of southern cities in transition from segregation to a new kind of community living. Each report is about a city which has confronted its problems with realism and honest purpose, and which has sought to overcome them.

Earlier reports in the series were:

Charlotte, by Pat Watters (June, 1964)

Louisville, by Benjamin Muse (June, 1964)

Memphis, by Benjamin Muse (July, 1964)

POPULATION

	1950		1960	
	Brunswick	Glynn County	Brunswick	Glynn County
Total	17,954	29,046	21,703	41,899
Negro	6,994	9,288	8,909	11,648
Per Cent Negro	39	32	41	28

Brunswick, Georgia, is a coastal city of the Deep South, as ancient in flavor in many ways as its many fat-trunked live oak trees, draped funereally with gray Spanish moss, and as modern in spirit, often, as its great hope that Thiokol Chemical Corp. will establish there a huge plant to build and test solid-fuel rocket boosters, aiming for the planets.

Brunswick is 174 miles from Albany, Georgia, and in many ways partakes of the same general south Georgia culture. Brunswick is 81 miles below Savannah

on the coast, and the two cities are much akin in age and history and culture. While Albany shamed America before the world by marching thousands of Negroes protesting intolerable conditions to jail in the sullen summer of 1962, Brunswick was quietly negotiating the desegregation of its lunch counters. While Savannah's race relations unfortunately, and perhaps unnecessarily, detoured from progressive change to explode in the streets in the summer of 1963, Brunswick was quietly desegregating city and county recreational facilities, and negotiating one of the first voluntary school desegregation actions in the Deep South. As much of the rest of the nation faced the turning-point spring and summer of 1964 with guilty fear about its Negro population, as Negroes rioted in Jacksonville, Florida, 78 miles down the coast, and as St. Augustine, 30 miles farther, writhed in Klan notoriety, Brunswick leaders of both races were making headway on civil rights law compliance, including hospital desegregation.

More importantly, the leadership and public and business agencies of the city were moving with some efficacy toward undoing the damages of discrimination in housing, education, and job opportunities for Negroes -- a steadier beginning than in most of America on the difficult and mostly underexplored problems of the culture of poverty.

Brunswick achieved its racial rapproachments before the summer of 1964 without a single street demonstration or boycott, and without a law suit instigated by Negroes. (A suit was brought unsuccessfully by white segregationist attempting to block school desegregation; it was answered by Negroes. A suit was brought by Negroes to compel desegregation of facilities on the nearby state-owned resort, Jekyll Island.)

All of this is not to say that down there in the salt air and vivid white, blue, and green seascape, with the twistings and twinings of the streams of the beautiful marshes of Glynn, there is an island of pure democracy where the idealism and the practices of American society are finally met. Efforts of persons of good-will, motivated by idealism in its true sense, have been important. But much that has been accomplished has been in a pattern increasingly becoming clear as one (if not the only) practical and hopeful way out of America's most paralyzing dilemma: a realistic recognition on both sides of enmities and prejudices, an awareness of the business and social (if not humanitarian) desirability of reconciliation, and the establishment of machinery for negotiation and mediation of opposed viewpoints and goals.

"Let me tell you something," said Dr. Joseph B. Mercer, the mayor of Brunswick, describing what he

tells Negro leaders "I was born in the South. I was reared on a big old peach orchard plantation in middle Georgia. So everything that you start talking about -- doing this and doing that -- in the first place, I've got to go against my rearing to do it."

"This thing of getting that which is due you -- that's a lifetime work," said the Rev. Julius Ceasar Hope, president of the Brunswick Branch NAACP and architect of Negro strategy and goals. "I think we need to continue to push in all of these areas..."

Brunswick's success in reconciling these and other conflicting mental sets has been attributable to three things specifically: (1) an unshakable desire that notoriety in race relations be avoided; (2) the existence of a biracial committee through which change might be effectively and acceptably channeled; and (3) the pushing by the Rev. Mr. Hope and associated Negro leaders of aspirations through a concerted strategy which keeps demonstrations, boycotts, court suits, and the like poised -- like military force in a nation's diplomacy -- ready for use.

How and why and what in the permutations of time, events, personality, place, and history allows Brunswick to achieve something -- not a perfect solution,

but what looks like a workable path to it -- that other similar small communities all around it have missed?

What answers there are to this are to be found mainly in the people of the place, in how they view what has happened, what is happening, what is likely to happen. Paradoxically, one of the easiest things to hear from them is that, for all its dependence upon open lines of communication, Brunswick needs perhaps even desperately a better and more forthright communication between the races.

The struggles of civilization date far back in Brunswick. The Spanish came in 1563 and built their missions out of a pastel white amalgam of sea sheels and mud called tabby, whose formula is lost. In 1736, General James Edward Oglethorpe built Fort Frederica on nearby St. Simons Island, among the earliest outposts of England in Georgia. From it, in a comic-opera little battle at Bloody Marsh a few years later, the English drove the Spanish out and in discouragement away from all the dominion of southeast America. In 1771, General Oglethorpe on orders of a Colonial Council, soon to be caught up in the American Revolution, established the town of Brunswick.

It occupies a peninsula surrounded by rivers, creeks, and marshland to the east, south, and west. (The city limits extend a mile or so into the Atlantic Ocean.)

A natural harbor with a channel 30 to 36 feet deep in the Brunswick River supports a state-financed dock that can't seem to prosper, and a variety of industries, from seafood picking and packing houses to plants processing paper and building materials to the big smoke stacks of the Hercules Powder Company.

Across the marsh and causeways are St. Simons, a middle-class, unpretentious, and mostly unspoiled resort (with jungles of virgin timber blessedly preserved), long favored by middle-class Georgians; Sea Island, long a spa reserved for the non-Semitic wealthy, and Jekyll Island, once the private preserve of the richest robber barons of the Nineteenth Century and now a state-owned park with luxury-high prices. These three islands combine to form the most lucrative industry -- tourism.

The Glynco Naval Base exerts economic and social influence (and blocks from the north the only avenue of territorial growth). And Thiokol has its pilot force (300 families) on hand laying the foundations for a hoped-for Defense contract that could mean 8,000 jobs for the area, according to City Planner Fred Bell.

Negro population increased more rapidly, proportionately, than the total population within the city limits of Brunswick between 1950 and 1960, but less rapidly, proportionately, than the total population outside the

city limits -- which tells a familiar story about suburbia. Normal growth (without Thiokol) would mean a population of 26,000 in Brunswick by 1970, and 62,000 in Glynn County -- with 11,180, or 43% of the population in the city Negro.

A 1962 publication of the city on its Perry Park Urban Renewal project, from which most of the above figures are taken, makes much of a comparison of the economic status of Brunswick's Negro population with that of nearby Georgia cities. Mean family income for Negroes is $2,744 per year, an increase of 41% since 1950, and higher than all other cities in Georgia except Atlanta and environs and Warner Robins, site of a large military complex. That this is a commentary on the economic plight of Negroes in Georgia more than any cause for self-congratulation or celebration in Brunswick is indicated by another statistic -- the median family income for all citizens of Brunswick: $5,044. In comparison with other Negro communities of Georgia, Brunswick Negroes are slightly better off in such matters as employment and housing.

All of these things are important and have a bearing. So do such character traits of a city as the attitude about the trees. The wonderful old oaks, with limbs twisting and roots spreading in colonizing growths, are everywhere, even all of a sudden, to the astonishment

of out-of-town motorists, in the middle of a street, including some of the downtown streets. Unwary cars occasionally bang into them. No one may cut down a tree without permission of the city's park commission, which in Brunswick is called the City Park and Tree Commission.

Surely, too, an influence is exerted by the visual impact of nature in Brunswick -- a common and everyday thing to those who live there, a pleasant shock each time he looks up for the visitor -- a vividness of color (not as dazzling as farther south in Florida, more soothing), with tropical fecundity and form of the trees and flowers, long reaches of marshland and sky and sea, blue and green everywhere, and a limitlessness to the horizon -- stretching flat planes, with salt in the air and the rich, overripe, pungent smell of the marsh in the wind (when the wind does not bring the chemical stench of paper mills). It is landscape and light for an artist, and in it symbols abound for such a writer as Georgia's lyrical poet of the Nineteenth Century, Sidney Lanier.

Away from the "length and the breadth of the marvelous marshes of Glynn," out on St. Simons, a more modern symbol may be seen. Once the beach was perfect, wide and hard-packed, a fine playground even at high tide. Now parts of it have washed badly, so that at high tides

the waters come up to sea walls, and over them into yards, pushing farther back the lines of summer cabins and beach homes over the years. Somehow the dunes shifted or were by man destroyed, and the natural order of things put out of kilter. Now men, in an effort to set things aright, to regain something lost, beautiful and precious, pile rock and cement in great jagged chunks to keep the onrushing tides from encroaching further and destroying. These desperate impromptu sea walls, tumbling and jagged-edged, have no beauty and are in contrast with the majesty of the sea, a grotesquery; but eventually, it is hoped, they may do their work, and restore a harmony and a balance to the beach intended by nature.

It is in the mood of this eternal process of destruction and waste, and the instinct to build back and restore, that one seeks something of the full story of Brunswick's achievement, something more than a dry case study, and for it turn to the voices of the people there, telling, as all the truth of human stories is, something richly complex, full of subtlety and nuances, like the sound of the sea.

THE STORY IN GENERAL

There was, first, the Biracial Committee, an unofficial, highly secretive agency for mediation and trouble-shooting in racial disputes. It was formed in 1960, but did little until confronted with the catalyst of a militant Negro civil rights organization.

This was the NAACP. Under new leadership of the Rev. Julius Ceasar Hope, who came to Brunswick in 1959, it was transformed from an almost extinct organization of older people into a vibrant, modern Negro movement, well versed in all the techniques and aspirations of direct action.

By 1962, the NAACP was able to present itself in negotiations as a formidable force. The Biracial Committee was there as the agency through which negotiations could be funneled, and decisions filtered.

The 1962 breakthrough was on desegregation of lunch counters. There were three negotiating sessions between the NAACP and the Brunswick Merchants Association.

There had been three demands: removal of discriminatory signs; desegregation of counters; desegregation of jobs. There was acquiesence on the first two, postponement on the third.

A two-week trial period was set up on the lunch counters. Members of the NAACP agreed to appear at certain times, not rush hours, at four stores. They had agreed to leave immediately if there were any trouble. White members of the Glynn Council on Human Relations sat quietly as observers. When there was no trouble during the trial period, the counters were desegregated for good. But there was no announcement of this. People found out about it gradually. This was the pattern Brunswick fell upon as the safest and surest.

"It was kept out of the news media," said Sam Altman, president of the merchants association. "We figured the less bragging we did, the less noise they made, the better it would work."

Mrs. J. C. Wilkes and her husband, a dentist, are among outstanding Negro leaders. She told a story to illustrate that the lunch counter desegregation worked out "real fine." A friendly white person had told her that she was at one of the lunch counters when Negroes came in, and another white person there looked up and said: "Oh,

Negroes are eating here now. Well it's about time."

The Rev. Mr. Hope described the trial period this way: "We had a certain number of people who were trained in non-violence -- this kind of a thing -- to go to the counters and get served and leave by a certain time, and this kind of a thing. At a certain time we would go to the counters. We would sit down. There were whites, but it was calm. We would sit down just like nothing was happening. They were looking and staring. They didn't say anything. There were a few who would get up. But all in all, it was a very pleasing situation. We got service. But some places, we got better service. This can be expected."

It was the following summer, 1963, before the next breakthroughs. Recreational facilities -- city and county parks, including a pavilion at St. Simons, but not swimming pools -- were desegregated. The same procedure was used: negotiation, this time with the two governments, and a plan approved by the Biracial Committee for a test period. When it was successful, they were opened, again without any public announcement.

(The federal court suit against segregation at another set of recreational facilities -- on state-owned Jekyll Island -- was pending at the time of the interviews

for this report. Subsequently a federal District Court ruled that facilities operated by the state -- the golf courses, bathing beaches and bathhouses, swimming pools, and the like -- had to be desegregated. The ruling did not cover facilities leased by the state to private operators. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, however, does.)

Here is how the Rev. Mr. Hope described desegregation of the recreational facilities: "We had no incidents whatsoever. Whites and Negroes from the very first night skated together ... no incidents ... bowled together ... no incidents ... played tennis together ... no incidents. They were very cordial. For instance, you would knock a ball over in their court. They would stop and throw your ball back. I'd say thank you. Just -- just like a normal game."

Edward T. Rogers, co-chairman of the Glynn County Council on Human Relations, and Mrs. Rogers, also active in the Council, were among white members who observed at the St. Simons casino during the two-week trial period.

He said: "I did not hear one word of complaint. I saw a few surprised looks when they came in. When it first started the Negroes were bowling here, and the white people would go 'way over to the other side in the farthest lane. But by the end of the week, they were bowling lane by lane. They brought little kids over to ride the

merry-go-round, and -- aw, they were just having a ball."

At the time of these interviews, pools had not yet opened for the summer of 1964, and there was apprehension about whether they would be. Negro leaders, including the Rev. Mr. Hope, said they had been promised that if they would not push for this in 1963, it would be done in 1964. "We actually compromised at that point," said the Rev. Mr. Hope.

But Dr. Joseph B. Mercer, mayor of Brunswick, said a couple of months before the time for decision: "In this matter we just get down to basic economics. If the time comes for the pools to be integrated, and they say this is the year, then strictly on the basis not of race but of economics, these pools will close." He said attendance of the whites would be drastically cut. "If integration comes, the pools go." That was, in fact, what happened.

Mrs. Rogers said in the spring of 1964: "The children -- the colored children here /on St. Simons/, they can't even go to the beach. There's not one swimming place they can go." (Since then, beaches have been desegregated.)

The Rev. Mr. Hope said that requests had been renewed early in 1964 to the city and county for desegregation

of the pools. "See, we don't let them wait until that time comes and say, 'We haven't had time to work it out.'" What if they were closed? "If they want to close the pools and nobody swim in them, we would go along with that. We're just asking for the same thing that our money is paying for. We're not asking for anything special."

An inevitable question in such a place as Brunswick is how well and how much have Negroes used facilities that have been desegregated. Dr. Wilkes said those who can afford it have. Mrs. Wilkes said, "The main thing is that you want to be able to go." Dr. Wilkes pointed out that adjusting to desegregation is as much a change for the average Negro as white person. But "once he passes through this, then he begins to recognize, "Well I am a first class citizen. I am going to do something about it.' Then you begin to uplift, which is as it should be."

The city's Negro general practitioner, Dr. James S. Ray, was asked if there was awareness of the new opportunities among the general run of Negro people he sees. He said, "It works two ways at the same time. Say I work for Mrs. Jones, see? If I go to Woolworth's store, and sit and eat there, Mrs. Jones will get rid of me. That's a kind of awareness there is. She gets it over to him that if you go there it means your job. Certainly there's awareness. All of the kids on the street are aware of it. But

the person who has the most to lose is not going to go against things."

Referring specifically to use of lunch counters, the Rev. Mr. Hope said: "It has been good. What we must understand is that Negroes have been accustomed to what they have been doing for hundreds of years. And I think when the white man understands that when they open these places, there won't be a whole lot of Negroes going in, things will be better. A lot of people say Negroes are not ready. Not all of them are. All of the white folks are not ready. All the nobody's are not ready. But there are some who are ready. Why leave them back?"

While the recreational facilities were being desegregated, negotiations were begun through the Biracial Committee with the school board on compliance with the 1954 Supreme Court desegregation decision. The NAACP let board members know that it had a suit drawn up, but not yet filed. The board realized that the suit would have meant dictation of terms. Voluntary action, as Dr. Wilkes put it, "would be to the board's advantage because it could set the pace."

Mrs. Wilkes said some of the board members were "quite receptive," others "not too pleased." Two later resigned.

W. A. Whittle, chairman of the board of education, a gray-haired, erect man of the older generation, recalled the "momentous decision" that came out of the negotiations. The board decided that it would be "best for the community, the school system and the people to start in a small way, believing that if they did, there would be probably less discord."

Six students, three boys, three girls, from the Negro high school (Risley High) were finally selected to attend all-white Glynn Academy -- two in the eleventh grade, four in the twelfth.

This time, the decision had to be announced, and, as Mr. Whittle said, it was publicised in the local paper and on radio, and "even on television -- Channel Four in Jacksonville." An organization not there-to-fore heard of, the Glynn Society, promptly placed ads on local radio against the decision. (Of the society Mrs. Wilkes said: "They're not leading people. A member of the Human Relations Council attended a Glynn Society meeting and didn't recognize anybody there.")

A more serious reaction was the filing of a suit in Federal court, by parents of white children. The Glynn Society was thought to be behind the suit, filed the day before school was to open. Federal Judge

Frank M. Scarlett, an avowed segregationist, enjoined the desegregation immediately, and school opened without the Negro children. The NAACP immediately appealed the decision, asking not only that the plan for the six students be allowed to operate immediately, but also that the entire school system be desegregated.

Thus, Brunswick was in the upside down position of having a federal court order it not to desegregate, and the local board appearing in appeals court to defend its right to do so. The board, however, opposed the NAACP demand for total integration of the system. Judge Scarlett's injunction was overturned quickly by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the Negro youngsters went into the school two weeks late. (Not until the summer of 1964 did the Court rule on the plea for total integration.)

"We had believed we would not have to have court suits," said Mr. Whittle. "If only they had left us alone."

Mr. Whittle said the leadership in the situation had represented a cross-section of the community, "a high type people" who wanted to "handle the situation in a way that promotes peace and accord."

One of the few white leaders in the city who had agreed readily to an interview, Mr. Whittle smiled gently and indicated courteously after going over all the facts

that he had said all that he had planned, apparently with some care, to say.

Carolyn Harris, 16, is one of the six Negro students. In that somewhat formal atmosphere of the middle-class living room of her wooden frame home near the center of town, she answered questions, often with a word or one sentence, about the first year, then drawing to its end.

Was she selected by Negro leaders or did she apply on her own? "I applied to go." The two-week delay starting school meant that "it was a little difficult at first because we had missed three or four chapters in some classes. We had to catch up. The teachers were very nice. They helped us."

What about the students? "When we first entered, most of the students -- they wanted to be friendly, but because of a few of the students there, they didn't speak to us. There were a few who wanted to speak, but they thought the other students would ridicule them. The first day one of the boys spoke to one of the boys there, and there was a kind of scrape there. But there was nothing else. The ridicule stopped altogether. After about a month everyone was speaking. Things are working out just fine. The students accept us in class. They want us in their group discussions."

Carolyn said courses at her old school and the new one are "basically the same." But the equipment at the new one is better. She said she had done about the same amount of studying in the new situation, once she caught up.

She is not a member of the NAACP Youth Council, she said, and her interest in going to Glynn was educational, rather than for the cause. "I've always wanted to go to Glynn -- especially after they got the new Science Building. I'm very interested in science; in fact, I'm majoring in it. I was just fascinated by the Science Building, and all the equipment it had in it. I wanted to work with it." She plans to be a biologist, and to go to Ohio State University.

What of extracurricular activities? Miss Harris said she was a member of the Science Club, Math Club, and Glee Club. And she was able to keep up with social activities in the Negro community. What about at Glynn? "We haven't participated in any yet. As I said, "I'm a member of the Math Club, and they're having a banquet on the tenth. And I'm going."

She entered a biology project in the school's science fair. It won second place, which meant a trip to the State Science Fair in Athens, Georgia. What was her

project?" "It has to do with decreasing cell activity to extend the life of man."

"I'm in an honor class in chemistry," she said. "That's an awfully good class." She praised the chemistry instructor, Herbert Handley, saying he "stands out brightest" among faculty members, all of whom are good. "He made us feel at home. He told us not to be nervous about anything. He really kept our spirits up that first couple of weeks."

What had she learned from the experience? "Besides education, I think I have learned about how people react. You can't judge people by what a minority says. You have to see the whole group. I have several friends. We help each other with all our things. I help them. We have a lot of conversations."

One of these friendships started in music class. It was with the girl who sat next to her. "I didn't have a copy of the music one day and she asked me if I would like to look on, so I told her yes. And then we started talking, and she takes geometry with me also, and when we would come in, we'd talk about the geometry, various ideas of how to work different problems."

Miss Harris said she made straight A's at Glynn except for a B in geometry. This made her an honor student, which, along with having an entry in the science fair, made

her a member of the Georgia Junior Adademy of Science.

Her other courses include English and history. She was studying modern literature. She prefers Hemingway to Faulkner. His "ideas are more realistic." Does Faulkner's South sound like anything she knows?" "No, it really doesn't. But I know it did exist once."

She said her school life had become quite normal. "I go to school in the morning, go to class, speak to other students. Everything goes nonchalant."

"Brunswick is wonderful. The people in it are wonderful, also."

Dr. and Mrs. Wilkes are active in the NAACP and the Glynn County Council on Human Relations, and are prominent in Negro civic and social affairs. He is originally from Pennsylvania, articulate and extroverted, with a ready laugh; she is from Savannah, pretty, vivacious, stylish, happy-voiced. They talked in an office of his dental clinic, in the spring of 1964. Outside at dusk, children shrilled and occasionally shrieked some great game in a dirt alley; a train with its own noise and shrill shrieks went by; doors slammed; dogs barked.

Why in their opinion had so much progress been made? "If you ask me if any of this would have come about without the NAACP," said Dr. Wilkes, "I would say almost unequivocally no."

He went on: "We didn't want to arouse the community in terms of victory and defeat. It had to be and still has to be careful counseling. The Glynn County Council on Human Relations has been invaluable on this counseling thing in terms of readying ourselves, because we had people with knowledge of the mechanics, so to speak, of the community. We have thus far been able to carry on our activities without outside interference... and I think this is the way it should be done. But don't think for a minute that we would offer any hesitancy about calling for additional help -- whether it comes from inside or outside -- if we needed it."

In any listing by whites and Negroes of those whose influence has been for the good of Brunswick race relations, the name of city manager Bruce Lovvern always came high. He is soft spoken, casual, with a slight mountain (North Georgia) twang to his southern drawl.

(His office is in the city hall. This is a formidable, narrow and tall, old-brick building, constructed in 1899. Some of its fine high ceilings have been lowered to modern, cramping standards to save on winter's fuel bills, only to make newly necessary the extra cost of air-conditioning in the longer, more severe summers. On each of the two ornate, iron staircases which climb steeply from

the first floor lobby to meet at a second floor landing, are fine little two-foot high, iron statues of cavaliers in their boots and feathered hats. In Mr. Lovvern's office is a council table, ancient and scarred, with similarly seasoned chairs of graceful, frail, and curving lines.)

Like many of the white leaders, he was reluctant to grant an interview. This was because of early agreements, involving the Biracial Committee, to avoid all publicity on racial progress. There were apparently several theoretical grounds -- that publicity itself becomes an annoying factor, that some things might better be learned slowly rather than breathtakingly in a headline, and that publicity might attract "outsiders" of both segregationist and integrationist persuasion. (It was not certain at the outset if any city officials would grant interviews. County ones never would. Finally Mayor Mercer did.) Mr. Lovvern talked freely and frankly for the record when he, too, finally agreed to an interview.

"In Brunswick," he said, "it's simply this: The leadership on both sides is willing to communicate with each other about these problems. The talk is frank and above board. It didn't just happen. It came about with time."

The first Biracial Committee meetings were cold.

Trust built up gradually and out of "being able to solve a problem or two along the line."

There is "a problem with Negroes on the committee. Some glory seekers say they are not representative Negroes."

Asked if by glory seekers he meant the Rev. Mr. Hope, he said he had a better opinion of him than some. "He has come to us before any step and told us his intentions." Thus, there have always been warnings of when, how, and why a demonstration might come, and this gives the Biracial Committee time to work out a solution. Mr. Lovvern said he told politicians Brunswick could be in much worse shape along thses lines.

He said the Rev. Mr. Hope had started out antagonistic to the Biracial Committee. He came in time to a willingness to work with it.

Why was Brunswick as early as 1960 able to form such a committee? Mr. Lovvern cited elements which make the city different from most in the area: a sizeable Jewish population; a colony of Portuguese people, descendents of fishermen attracted to the shrimp-rich South Georgia shores; a Catholic influence; in sum, a seaport, cosmopolitan flavor giving people experience in tolerance toward those different from themselves.

He mentioned as another factor the pattern of

Negroes and whites living close together. On a spring drive through the old city, with azaleas in bloom, a flow of soft lavender and red in yards, he pointed out white and Negro residents sitting on porches of simple, square-shaped wooden houses, side-by-side in close-together rows. A fine residential street of wide yards and many of the big old moss-hung trees ended abruptly at a dirt road with rows of shacks occupied by Negroes.

(The drive showed other ways that chance and nature have blessed Brunswick, making it in many ways what modern planners recommend a city should be. There is the abundance of marsh and water. The shortage of land has resulted in a minimum of the evils of suburbia -- although they are spreading in treeless fields north of town -- and it has forced a remarkable diversity in land use, a healthful intermingling not just of races in neighborhoods, but of age and economic groups, and of residences and industries, amicably. The fascinating and not unlovely shapes and white-sand color and textures of a gypsum factory are the view out of picture windows in a fashionable neighborhood, and a child in the night through most of the town stirs to the grand sound of ship horns in the harbor.)

Mr. Lovvern said that of all the influences for racial progress, economics was the greatest. "The merchants

aren't fools." They know that Negroes comprise 40% of the population, that they make a large if not commensurate contribution to the economy, and that it would be costly to alienate them. "They had read and heard about boycotts."

At about the time of the 1962 negotiations on lunch counters, the Glynco Naval Base began to exert an influence on race relations, he said. Orders and policies had begun to filter down -- things like not allowing personnel to participate in segregated recreation programs. There had been investigations of community attitudes, and the power structure knew it. "They feared the Navy would close Glynco or cut it back."

A visit to the straight-street, military otherworld of Glynco confirmed the impression of by-the-numbers correctness of attitude, and a certain tactfulness about it. There are apparently sincere efforts toward equal employment. Base personnel participate in the Biracial Committee, and one man attends meetings of the Council on Human Relations, but has not joined.

Thiokol, Mr. Lovvern said, had more to do with school desegregation than anything else. With the main office established, and the 300 families of the firm in the area, and a government contract being sought, the Biracial Committee

and school board knew they couldn't afford to let anything upset normalcy.

A problem in continuing race relations negotiations, Mr. Lovvern said, is a misconception on the part of some Negro members of the Biracial Committee about its real function. They tend to want to use it to say who will be hired or appointed to positions -- rather than to assure merely that Negroes are. They resemble ward-heeling politicians of the turn of the century seeking patronage, he said.

There was more resistance in 1964 to racial changes than two years before. He cited the influence of the Glynn Society, describing it as from the middle-low income grouping, "good honest Georgians who feel strongly." Somewhere behind them, he said, was power and money. "You don't hire attorneys like they had in the school suit for peanuts."

It would take harder work in the future to avoid "drawing the lines" -- getting a racial alignment over the issues affecting Negroes. He said he didn't think the Rev. Mr. Hope wanted to draw the lines, that in the past he had gotten good advice "somewhere, from people behind the scenes."

Mr. Lovvern was one of the few of either race interviewed who had a good word to say about the local newspaper, the Brunswick <u>News</u>. He said it had done a good

job, a very careful one, of not "blowing things out of proportion."

Summing up, City Manager Lovvern said: "A political decision has to be made on any racial problem. It would be very easy to choose a path of total resistance. We are fortunate that the political bodies of Brunswick and Glynn County made a decision in 1962 that they would try to work things out, try to keep communications open. This is necessary. Communities who don't do it live to regret it."

He pointed out that a study of what was happening in Albany in 1961 and 1962 (the study was made by him) was instrumental in Brunswick's decision to do otherwise. "It will end the same," he said. "In this country, Albany can't win."

Both Dr. Wilkes and Mrs. Wilkes had expressed hope about the changing quality of white opinion. "Everybody knows now," said Mrs. Wilkes, "that we do want to integrate. It's not such a bad word now. In fact some white citizens take pride in saying there is no segregation."

Mrs. Wilkes told another of the stories she seems to cherish about what one white person said to another. One white woman said to another she didn't believe in forcing integration. The other replied that if she hadn't been forced

once to attend an integrated meeting, her attitude never would have changed. "But by forced integration, an entire new world had opened to her. She sees Negroes in a completely different light, and she's just so happy."

Dr. Wilkes said that for such reasons, he had no regrets about coming South to live. "I was a little disturbed the first couple of years because I didn't have the freedom I thought I should have. But it's done now. It gives a certain amount of pride and respect to know that since I've been in Brunswick I've been able to contribute to something that should go down in history. It makes me feel good. It makes me feel part of the community and this is what I think the Negro should be. He can't be if he's going to be restrained and neglected, and this, that, and the other.

"I'm proud of our county and what has happened, and we're looking for even greater things."

BRUNSWICK AT THE TIME OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

The following sketch shows how far Brunswick had been able to move through neighborly patterns of unforced change before federal law came with its commands.

A Howard Johnson restaurant was desegregated. No other restaurants were, and no motels were.

Few non-traditional jobs were open. Some of the large plants were advertising for help on a non-discriminatory basis, but considered few Negroes qualified. The chief project of the NAACP was an effort to get Negroes hired as cashiers and clerks in downtown stores; a training school was being conducted, with instructors from the National Cash Register Co. Another goal was municipal jobs: meter readers, firemen, and the like. According to Mr. Lovvern, the city "had to screen 40 to 50 people to get one Negro cop;" credit records were the main problem here. The city's Urban Renewal Department had one Negro typist; she worked for the one Negro professional in the department.

There were no problems with voting or voter registration. White politicians even urged it. The Rev. Mr. Hope had run for City Council in the last election, and was defeated, getting only part of the Negro vote. (This effort opened sore questions which were much discussed at the time of these interviews.)

A Negro, an aged man, had been appointed to the Park and Tree Commission.

The Glynn-Brunswick Memorial Hospital had an "open" policy, "not segregated or integrated, but open." Mrs. Wilkes, expecting a baby, had applied to be confined in the white maternity section. "They say we are having this baby just to integrate the hospital." The hospital had integrated its staff, with two Negro physicians, one a surgeon, and a dentist (Dr. Wilkes), and Negro nurses, including surgical nurses. Surgical suites were desegregated.

The schools had begun token desegregation, and lunch counters and most public recreation (except swimming) were, as has been noted, open. The library was desegregated, and so were most community service agencies.

In the other large area of people's hopes and needs -- housing -- Negroes and whites do as they typically do in a coastal city, live on the same streets, often side-by-side in the older sections. But in the newer suburbs, all is white.

TWO LEADERS
(AND SOME CONCERNS OF THE DAY)

"No publicity," said Mayor Mercer. "I think it's been the answer. Every time you heard much of a furor, what the furor was about did not get done. And yet the things you didn't hear about, gradually people began to talk about, 'Well did you know this had been done and this was being done?' Whenever a great hullabaloo was made, that just killed it. So it became obvious that the Biracial Committee had very wisely taken the stand that they could get more done by trying to act /in secret/."

Mayor Mercer is a medical doctor, middle-aged, big, robust, full of energy, although his voice is slow and quiet, sounding deceptively older than he is, and sometimes sounding, especially in his complaints about things, sing-song querulous. When he finally agreed to talk, the interview was near midnight, the only time he had open all week. It was at his offices, new and big and elaborately equipped, near the city hospital.

He began: "This friend of mine said, 'You know,

Joe, the funniest thing is Brunswick needs you like a constipated man needs a good dose of castor oil. One good dose, and get it done with, but never again."

He said he hadn't been involved in any of the race relations matters until he was elected to the city commission in February, 1963 -- 14 months before. He wasn't involved in the lunch counter or parks breakthroughs. "I was not actually involved in the schools except to voice an opinion. Having run for office and having been elected by the people with the opposition of the majority of city commissioners, the majority of the county commission, with all the political powers that be opposed to me, and having won with an overwhelming majority, nearly a thousand I believe, better than two to one, I felt that I had a responsibility to speak. I felt that I could have some effect on their taking a moderate approach."

Of other racial matters, he said he wrote the constitution and bylaws of the hospital, "and in this field we made sure every doctor got equal standing from the beginning." Negro regular nurses are on the same level in everything as white ones, he went on. "The girl we thought would give them the most trouble was the one who invited Negro nurses to use the nurse's dressing room."

He said, "At the hospital we do things on the basis of what is right. Every premature Negro baby born there is carried right into the white nursery, on the basis of rendering a service to human beings."

In March 1964, when this interview was conducted, the most talked-about event in town was a one-day job walk-out of the hospital's Negro employees. Although Negro leaders such as the Rev. Mr. Hope and the Wilkes were intently making the point that the walkout was strictly economic, had nothing to do with race relations, and had nothing, in fact, to do with the NAACP, Brunswick properly regarded it as another part of the civil rights drive, and it had been referred to the Biracial Committee.

Mayor Mercer had much to say about the walkout, but for background to his remarks here is, first, what was said about it by the Rev. Frank Nalls, chairman of the hospital authority. He is also superintendent of Epworth by the Sea, a Methodist Church hostel and meeting place on St. Simons. His office there has glass walls and rich, subdued modern furnishings, with a drawing of a planned new hospital and five Boy Scout certificates and plaques on a wall. His face, broad and tanned under gray hair, was troubled. He had, he said, just received word from Washington that a representative of the federal government would be in town the next week to investigate a complaint of discrimination at the hospital.

He made no comment on this for the moment, but talked instead of how the walkout had come "without notice," preceded only by a letter from employees requesting increased pay. The walkout lasted 24 hours. "As one man put it,"

he said, "how inhuman can you get, to leave sick patients in their beds?"

He lifted his hands and let them fall hard on his desk. "I felt we were coming along pretty well; this is the tragedy of it." There is, he said, no racial difference in pay scales; the walkout was by the lowest paid help, maids and janitors, all of whom are Negroes. It came after a change from weekly to bi-weekly pay. What they were asking for, the Rev. Mr. Nalls said, was the minimum wage. No hospital pays it. To do so would mean exorbitant room rents, he said. "I'm convinced /the walkout/ was all planned by the NAACP."

He said the walkout endangered the moderate leadership in race relations, of whom he counted himself one. "I have a feeling of betrayal. They've betrayed all those who have worked to help them. I feel most reluctant to do anything further. Any concessions that are made are looked upon as weaknesses to be seized on and exploited, rather than as..."

He didn't finish the sentence. Then: "This is a place that prided itself on the advances made. Some of us were ready to accept the criticism we knew would come to us, for the sake of peace. And now, to have that peace threatened."

He said the request by Mrs. Wilkes for admission to "the regular obstetrics suite, with the hospital in a terribly crowded condition" had created resentment, criticism of me." When she was accepted, "it was shouted to the housetops." He said, "I doubt if she can stand the martyrdom this will cause her, and she can't back down."

And now the complaint to the federal government had been made. He said he didn't know who did it. "I'm afraid they've lost ground. Regardless of law, it's bad when you get the white citizens' backs up."

His whole posture, tone, and voice expressed indignation and hurt. Here was the voice of moderation in such a place as Brunswick under extreme pressure, with what it considered much provocation to anger.

"We have sacrificed friendships, subjected ourselves to criticisms needlessly, all of us. The biggest thing lacking in the Negro is a sense of appreciation."

Then with no question prompting it, he gave the rationale of his actions in race relations: "The Supreme Court is the law of the land. I feel that its members have violated their trust, and perjured themselves. Yet I feel that until what they have done is corrected -- and I believe it will be -- their rulings are the law. If I were a Hindu and if contempt for the Supreme Court were a

crime, I would spend the next three incarnations in jail. But I am still bound by its rulings." He said he felt the 1954 school decision had "ruined" all that Negroes "on their own merits" had earned for themselves.

His thoughts turned again to Mrs. Wilkes. "She's a fine woman. Her skin is lighter than mine. She is a college graduate. If anybody could break the ice, she's the perfect one. Yet now, if she does, it's going to create a hardship on her, a scar. Thousands of people could personally abuse her. Not physically. But she's such a cheerful person. It could poison her.

"People like her and me..." He was silent. Then: "The Lord help us if we don't keep the middle of the road in power."

Mayor Mercer's views were in somewhat different tone. He thought there had been "poor handling" by the hospital administrator. Doctors had been trying to work out solutions to some of the problems. The pay is low compared with national standards, he said, but quite high compared with, say, Waycross, Georgia. But one thing, he said, was "most disturbing." If the walkout was just purely a matter of economics, why hadn't the Negroes come to him and other white doctors first, as they often had in the past with problems?

He cited instances where the hospital administrator had discharged Negroes for absenteeism in cases of genuine illness. One of these was the case of Missy. "Of course, Missy came back to the doctors /for help/ because she was a favorite of all of us. She was a typical Aunt Jemima, a little old five-by-five, just as sweet and nice and everybody just dearly loved her, and so we jumped him right away and he was very adamant about it. He asked me what would I do, and I said I would put her back on the payroll whether she worked or not, to show my personnel that loyalty was going to be rewarded. A niece of hers had died and left many children, and she had gone up and brought 'em all back, and was trying to feed and clothe these children. And here she was about to die herself... He relented." He said he had told the administrator: "You educate yourself. Try to think as these people think. Try to see their problems."

Dr. Mercer said another thing that bothered him was that the Negroes knew how strongly he and other doctors felt about duty to patients. He said he "preached it" to them in orientation lectures. "What's the motive?" asked Dr. Mercer. "What are they after? Is it the NAACP? I don't know."

Mayor Mercer also talked about politics. He had

been first elected to the city council in February 1963, to fill the unexpired term of J. Russell Tuten, who had just been elected to Congress. He was then elected mayor in October 1963, for a full term. In this election, he had been opposed by the Negro leadership.

"The fact that made me feel good about all the problems of the last election was that Negroes called me and said, 'Doctor, they're telling a lot of lies about you. But you've been in my house at three in the morning and I didn't have a penny in my pocket and you took care of my child. I know you better than this.' How could the NAACP put out a letter to the Negro people saying that if they voted for me they were committing murder?"

He also commented that former Mayor Tuten "had probably in his own quiet country way done more in this town that he never got credit for than anybody."

Dr. Mercer had full Negro support in his first race. He had met with a group of Negro leaders. "They asked me what I stood for. I said that insofar as lunch counter desegregation was concerned, I was with them because I do not feel it is right for a man to have 21 counters in his store and say, 'I'll sell to you from 20 but you can't buy from the twenty-first one.' But I said let me make my position clear. I feel that any man who wants to go out here on Glenn Avenue and open up a business and hang

a sign over his door and say, 'I will sell only to one-eyed, one-armed Indians from Arizona,' who is that big a fool that he can sit there and wait for this, I defend his right to do it. Because it's his money made by the sweat of his brow and therefore, it's his right."

He said he told them he thought desegregation of public owned facilities was right "but when it came to private, this was something that had to be approached on the basics of economics and not on the basis of government, and I want it clearly understood." Everyone there, he said, including Dr. Wilkes, said all right, they understood. They might not agree, but they understood.

"I told 'em this," he went on. "I said I want to tell you something. It has generally been stated that Negroes vote in a bloc. It's been generally stated that in Brunswick -- the reason I said it was because there were one or two people sitting in that room -- it's been generally stated that if the right money got into the right hands that the Negro vote would be delivered. I want to tell you here and now that when you work for me it will be a labor of love. I have no money to spend and I will spend no money. One man got up and left the meeting that night and went straight to the opposition. This man is now shown up.

"Dr. Wilkes said: 'Doctor, we don't want any Negro

to take one dime for working for you in this election. We want 'em to work according to good government principles and this is what we are trying to do.'"

When he ran for re-election, he said, "I stated that I was going to do what I thought was right for all races; that probably some Negroes would want me to go 75 miles per hour; there were going to be some white ones were going to want me to go into reverse; and I was probably going about 25 to 30 miles per hour on a road that I thought was right because my aim was to take the majority of people with me.

"I also made the statement that I thought they could legislate half a mile, they could carry through co-operative work three quarters of a mile, and I said it's up to God-a-mighty that last quarter, and I don't know what can ever be done about that."

Word went around, he said, that the Rev. Mr. Hope would run for the city council in that race. "I said if that J. C. in his name stood for Jesus Christ, he could not get anything done with the way things stood. This is not the time." He said he called Dr. Wilkes, thinking at the time he was secretary of the NAACP. He said he told him: "I ask you to use your influence to get Mr. Hope not to run. I don't think it's the right time. What I want is give me one year to see what I can do without stirring this pot now.

Give me one year and then you got elections coming up. If you want to run somebody you can. I'm not saying don't run anybody; all I'm saying is this is not the time."

The phone call was a disaster, "stupid" he had called it earlier, not trying to escape at least some of the responsibility for the outcome.

"We went through it four times. He got real nasty, and I got real nasty too, because I've got a temper. I said if you want somebody to tell what to do you better get another candidate. Three days later they came out for Copeland." This was Millard A. Copeland, then a city councilman and long active in the city's politics.

Mayor Mercer said he split the Negro vote in the campaign. He said Negro ministers asked him for cards; they said they couldn't speak out for him, but they could hand cards out.

Referring to a more recent election for county commission, Dr. Mercer said he thought political activity was still setting Negroes back. "They come out endorsing the people who have made promises over the years and broken every promise, instead of trying to endorse people who -- at least now -- are refreshingly saying different things from what they used to say."

He said he went ahead after becoming mayor as he would have if he had gotten all the Negro vote. He said he maneuvered the naming of the first Negro to a city board -- J. P. Atkinson to the Park and Tree Commission. Mr. Atkinson is a noted gardener in Brunswick, he said. He said he told the Commission: "I want a qualified Negro. I'm not wanting to just put a Negro on -- I want to stand up and say I have chosen a man because of his qualifications." He said he had hoped to name Dr. David J. Griffin, the Negro surgeon, to the housing authority,but he was "erroneously" accused of being part of the hospital walkout. He said he told him he couldn't do it, now.

Mayor Mercer described his modus operandi for bringing about consensus on a thing like a board appointment for a Negro. "I don't just do these things. My method is to pick out about ten responsible people, tell them what I'm going to do, discuss it with 'em in detail, and say all right, I want you to pick out about ten more. It pyramids. And then you get the support. You get other people seeing what you're trying to do. Being with you and helping you sell your program."

He said he had done this toward naming a Negro to the recreation board. "Then in the midst of it we got a letter from the NAACP saying they wanted W. C. McNeely,

the coach at Risley High -- the very man we were considering." He said he got phone calls from the people he had called saying don't do it. "So last week we went ahead and named a white man."

"No communication at all," he exclaimed. "This man /Hope/ has never called me or come to me. Apparently this man has decided that I am so opposed to him...And I am. I don't intend to go to him. I'm his mayor. He can come to me. I'd be glad to give him an audience. In fact I'd love to because I want him to know the truth from me. Because he's been told so much stuff. I'm beginning to think some of this at the hospital is an attempt to embarrass me. I hope this is wrong." He said his only basis for this was hearing that the Rev. Hope was at the hospital on the day of the walkout.

"My wife was down there giving bed baths to Negro patients, and it made her so mad she couldn't see straight."

He paused and then: "The very people who they need to help them are the ones they have alienated because these are the people who have compassion for people." Again a pause. "And yet I don't know. I'm confused right now. I tell you frankly, I'm so confused on this thing that I don't know what next step I'm going to take. You stop and wonder if you're right in what you think is right."

"The only thing we can do is go day by day trying to do what we know to be right and to conscientiously try, as people show one by one that they are more interested in finding out how far we will go rather than to go by plateaus. This situation didn't get there overnight and can't be cured overnight. And then to go as far as we dare go so long as we can take the majority of the people with us."

He said he was the only man in Georgia who ever ran for office with the avowed opposition of the Ku Klux Klan and the NAACP. "I made the statement repeatedly that if I had the power and God would wipe my conscience clear, if I could cut 100 white throats and 100 Negro throats, the rest of us could do a good job of finding a solution." He repeated his belief that you have to carry the people with you, and he voiced his opposition to the federal civil rights legislation.

He described his own efforts to reduce the functions of local government and give private enterprise a larger share in solving public problems. "What I wanted to do was go in and condemn every substandard house in the city of Brunswick. Whambo. And then put a moratorium right here. Stop and say wait a minute: 'They're condemned now. If you property owners will come in here and replace this housing with standard housing, we will continue

for three or four or five years to give you the same tax structure that you had on the old house.' But there's no law. No legal precedent. You can't do it!"

He said the lending institutions "are banding together, trying to help people to become home owners rather than renters. They formulated the plan; I just gave 'em the general outline of what I wanted; they deserve credit for it." The institutions will fund a plan whereby anyone in the urban renewal area can make application to try to clear his credit to become a home owner. The institutions will get a complete credit record on the applicant and try to work out a plan for clearing it up. If they are able to close a home loan for the applicant, he pays $5. If they can't clear his record, he pays nothing. Every financial institution was cooperating.

The urban renewal project covers 70 acres in the heart of the city. In this area are 209 families, all but 39 of whom are Negroes. It includes some of the worst slums, but not the worst, and was picked mainly because of its large amounts of unused land. There will be a new elementary school and junior high in the area, and a park and playground with a community building. Private and public housing will replace slum housing, and the assumption is that most of the present occupants will move into it.

A byproduct of the project has been development of a Minority Committee of the Citizens Advisory Committee, a Negro group which has become a sounding board not just for urban renewal problems but those of Negro life in general. Subcommittees have worked out solutions to problems involving transportation, schools, parks, water and sewage, and street lights. Negroes have thus had an opportunity to express themselves to white officials who attend the meetings on long pent-up grievances, and to participate in civic problem-solving. White politicians have gained from this a new insight into Negro life and troubles. An exchange between the Negro community and city hall has thus been established, full-time.

The credit problem, according to Robert Mauney, urban renewal director, is the key to the tasks of relocation that urban renewal requires. Negroes might have a job and money saved for a down payment on a new home, but previous bad credit records block them. For some Negroes in the area, Mr. Mauney said, expectations have risen too high. The $7,000 home they can afford will be far better than the one they had, but palls in the light of the $12,000 one they would like to get. For others, the whole thing has meant a confusion almost schizophrenic under the strain of making

decisions of a kind they have never had to make before, and the prospect of total change in living conditions and habits. He told of hopes of getting social workers to help these people in the transition. William L. Blakely, the Negro assistant in the Urban Renewal Department, a sociologist with the M. A. degree, told of the plight of Negroes in the area who, on the strength of anticipated purchase of their property, fell victim to small-loan agencies and others offering credit at high rates. One woman had somehow been convinced of the wisdom of making $850 worth of repairs to her home, which was to be destroyed.

(In the midst of the interview with Mr. Blakely, a tall, serious-faced, slim, middle-aged Negro man in overalls came in. He was Mr. Dawson, a contractor, and was asked by Mr. Blakely to serve on a new committee concerned with the urban renewal project. He listened to details, considered the thing, and said finally, slowly, "Yes, I can do it." He talked awhile of the relatively progressive atmosphere in Brunswick, saying the middle Georgia county where he came fron had "no concept of progress." He went out, a serious, purposeful man, grave, drawing slowly on his pipe, much dignity to him.)

Mayor Mercer, toward the close of the interview, alluded to the new tenseness that came over southern whites in the early 1950's. He told of how the state turned down a Negro bid to use the National Guard Armory for a heart benefit fund. "I said for God's sake tell me why. I can remember as a little boy -- at least 35 years ago -- I went to the Negro schoolhouse and watched their plays and they came to our schoolhouse and watched our plays. That was good. This was in the so-called backwoods. I said, for goodness sakes, what's wrong with this sort of a thing?"

And then turning back to the recent way of handling things, he said he knew of other communities taking the same quiet approach Brunswick has to racial progress. "We must have been one of the earliest ones with a biracial committee and so forth. I wasn't there so I can point with pride to the ones who were. Let me say this: there are men who are on the political other side of the fence that I wouldn't give air view in a jug politically that I have to admire for what they've done in this biracial situation because they have shown themselves to be, in at least one category, able to measure up."

"I've been a dreamer," said Mayor Mercer after another pause. "It's taking more out of me than I have a right to give. And the things I've tried to do, instead

of my enemies blocking me, it is the people I would think would be shoulder to shoulder with me. I constantly have to overcome them."

The Rev. Julius Ceasar Hope is a young man, tall, slim, handsome, with an intense, feeling way of speech. He had just returned to his small, pleasant home on a main Negro residential street near downtown Brunswick, next door to his church, the Zion Baptist Church. He had been away all week conducting services at a revival meeting in middle Georgia. The interview in his living room, with its pictures of Jesus and the late John F. Kennedy in prominent places, and its array of big and little toys belonging to Julian Hope, age two, was interrupted by phone calls and people coming by to see him.

The Rev. Mr. Hope came to the city in 1959. The Brunswick NAACP then was almost dormant, kept barely alive by a faithful few older people. One of these is Mrs. Georgia Gibbs, a lady of great dignity and much energy. She had helped found the chapter in 1929 soon after returning from Spelman College in Atlanta where she had as a student volunteer worked under Dr. W. E. B. Dubois in an anti-lynching

effort. Mrs. Gibbs said the Brunswick chapter asked the Rev. Mr. Hope to assume leadership. He said he would only if she and other older people would stay in, and help him. "Otherwise the Negroes would say it came from off-people."

One of the problems of his leadership, including his difficulties in the election, apparently stems from this tendency of the tradition-bound coastal community of Negroes to look askance at people from other parts. An older Negro man said: "One thing that holds us back is that Negroes practice discrimination. We've got what you call a 'been-here' concept of life. 'Been here' and 'come here.' A 'come here' can't be a 'been here.' I've been here 26 years, but I'm not a citizen yet."

Brunswick was the Rev. Mr. Hope's first full-time ministry. He had grown up in Mobile, received the B. S. at Alabama State College, and received his divinity degree at the Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta. While he was in college, he served three years as an assistant pastor at a Montgomery church, and worked in the Montgomery bus boycott under Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Did he consider himself the same kind of leader as Dr. King? "I'm what you'll let me be. I can be the negotiating type of leader, if you let me be that. Or I

can be a demonstrator, but not outside the law. Anything I do is within the law. If the state law conflicts with the constitutional law, I'll go with the constitutional law."

How did he come by the name Julius Ceasar? There was no significance that he knew of. "I tell you the truth I guess my parents just gave me that name. That's all." Then he didn't plan to rule the world? "No," laughing. Then seriously: "I don't plan to rule the world. I plan to help save the world."

Did he come to Brunswick planning to continue the civil rights fight he had experienced in Montgomery? "My interpretation of being a pastor is that you can't just be concerned with pulpit duties. There must be concern about the whole man. So therefore I've always been interested in civil rights and each man getting that which is due him."

The movement really started with an attempt in 1962 by several Negroes, including him and Dr. Wilkes, to play golf at Jekyll Island during a Negro dental convention. "When we got there everybody was playing. It was hot, the sun was shining, about 12 o'clock. They told us the course was closed for watering. At that point I said to myself we need some kind of organization, an organization that actually

when they said the place was closed down, we could stay there 'til it opened up."

"We organized." They studied statistics of what had happened all over the state and country where demonstrations had occurred. "We looked up their procedures and their methods. I tried to pick out the good and I tried to get around the bad."

It was decided that they would address the city commission, the county commission, the merchants association, the chamber of commerce, all those who had power in areas where Negroes were segregated. Letters were written to all those people, asking for conferences. He showed copies of those early letters: "We feel that you, the commissioners, are concerned about these grievances and are willing to work with us in the spirit of Godliness" ... "It isn't our desire to disrupt the peace and harmony of this community; but definite action must be taken at this time."

The reaction was "very, very interesting." Lunch counters were only one of many grievances cited. "We were talking about jobs, recreational facilities, Negro firemen, meter readers, policemen. We just covered the water front. Wherever we were responsible for paying taxes, we figured we ought to be able to receive some benefits if we are qualified. We are not asking for anything that we are not

qualified to get."

They also "tried to fix it so that it wouldn't seem we were demanding anything. We wanted to let them know that we wanted to negotiate, wanted to talk about it." They were aware of the Biracial Committee, but "as far as outward results, we hadn't seen much of it." The committee had gotten some Negro police, but "if they'd done a whole lot, we wouldn't have had all those grievances."

One of the first goals was getting discriminatory signs down. This was successful at city hall right away. The county took a little longer. So did downtown stores.

Then came the negotiations on lunch counters. "We had to come to a point where we said that we want this done by a certain time. We've talked about it long enough. We asked for a certain time; they gave us a certain time. This is all we were looking for." It didn't even have to be the exact time they asked for. "Just give us something to look forward to. They understood demonstrations would come otherwise."

Was he really prepared to demonstrate during negotiations? "I was in the service and I'm like Uncle Sam. I always like to stay in shape. If anything comes up I'm ready for it, see? But I don't want to do it. That's the

reason I want to try to work out the best way. We always stay prepared. We have one of the finest youth councils in the state."

Mass meetings were held every Thursday night beginning in the summer of 1962. Newsletters were published every week. He showed samples of these, early ones mimeographed, later ones printed. They contained peppery news of the movement, exhortations on specific local issues and general themes like non-violence and the need for Negroes to better themselves.

How many were in the movement then? The majority of the Negro community, said the Rev. Mr. Hope. How many would have marched? Three to four thousand "would have been dead with it."

When he came in, he didn't try to take over the NAACP, the Rev. Mr. Hope said. But when he was elected president, he began the movement. "Some people might have been against me, but they weren't against what I was doing. They might not have liked me. But they wanted a better time, too. You see? So therefore they didn't get out and work against me. Then, too, this thing was happening all around us, you see. And that had a big bearing on what happened. Albany did. Little Rock. Atlanta and all the

other places that had these demonstrations, all this bad publicity.

"We had to let these people know we weren't looking for publicity. We were looking for results. That's still our motto. Not publicity; results."

Were they conscious of a pattern of letting the Biracial Committee take credit for what the NAACP had initiated? "We weren't worried about credit. We know where it goes. All of us have had a hand in what happened here. Without the NAACP, nothing that's been done would have been done. If you do a job, people know who does it.

Did they rest between each breakthrough? The Rev. Mr. Hope looked patient. He explained: "This is our strategy. We have two or three things going on at one time. We've always got something on the docket. For instance, while we were fooling with the recreational facilities, we had the letters to the board of education asking them to move along with the Supreme Court decision of 1954. We put the whole thing before them, and try to pick the most vulnerable spots. We just keep moving."

Since the schools, "we've been moving in the area of trying to get Negroes as firemen, meter readers, and trying to get Negroes hired in other positions than sweeping floors, and this kind of a thing."

Here the Rev. Mr. Hope smiled. "I make a mistake sometimes. I took this matter [of jobs] to the Biracial Committee when the merchants association didn't do anything. But instead of going back to the Biracial Committee, I put forth this idea that if certain things didn't happen by a certain time, then we were going to boycott. I would have boycotted, but I would have gone back on my word, if I had gone and boycotted without clearing it through the Biracial Committee. It doesn't hurt me to apologize; any time I'm wrong I do that."

The boycott, he said, "is always there." In fact, at that time, Easter time, some people were boycotting anyway, "not because we've asked them not to buy, but because of the way people are treating them at this point."

Nearly everyone in Brunswick during the spring of 1964 mentioned a recent event when Negro youngsters went around town with placards urging people to register to vote. Many people thought a demonstration was finally taking place, until they got close enough to read the signs, with mottos like: "I'm too young to vote. What's your excuse?" The Rev. Mr. Hope chuckled about those signs. "We weren't demonstrating. We were just trying to get people to register. But some of our people can't read, you see. And when they saw those signs, they just didn't go in the stores."

After jobs? "In all these areas, it's not total. So we've always got something to do. We want people on these boards, see. Out of all the counters and the parks and all these other openings that we've got, if we don't get somebody on the inside, you see, all this stuff will be futile. We need somebody on the recreation board, on the board of education, to keep /the Political Action Committee/ posted and keep the community up to date." There are no commitments on board appointments. The hope is to get them from people seeking office.

Then he said: "This thing of getting that which is due you, that's a lifetime work. I think we need to continue to push in all these areas, especially in this area of getting Negroes /on boards/. I don't mean just anybody, but somebody who's going to be representative, somebody who will do the kind of job that ought to be done and continue the kind of atmosphere that's here now.

"If we can continue to keep the doors open and continue to talk and reason together and try to work out our problems, understanding that we need to start working on them, you see, I think things will be peaceful here as long as this attitude can exist. But when you come and say we're not going to do this -- nobody's going to tell nobody what we're going to do and what we're not going to do. You

see. Then that's when you get trouble.

"As long as we can talk about it we can try to understand each other's problems and try to work it out for the betterment of all. Then I think we will have the kind of community [we want] and from this community the world can receive information to help them move on and have a better life for all men."

He said he was "very hopeful" of winning a seat on city council in the next city election. About his previous race, he said, "We fought a nice campaign. The guy I opposed, I think I was better qualified than he was as far as training was concerned. But the people -- some Negroes -- we've still got some Negroes who will sell their vote you see; we've still got some Negroes who still believe white is right and that is that. See, they're accustomed to this. This is years of something within, I would say, that's going to take time and education to get out."

He said there was a heavy vote in his race, that he might have won had it been normal. He said he got more than half of the Negro vote, and some -- not a whole lot -- of the white vote. He said he thought there was enough "togetherness" in the Negro community this time for him to win. He said those who voted against him had had their consciences working on them since the election.

Asked whether the alliance with Mr. Copeland had hurt him with the Negro vote, and about reports that Mr. Copeland was formerly a close supporter of Marvin Griffin, former governor and statewide segregationist captain, he said: "We didn't know that. I couldn't endorse anybody that had anything to do with Griffin." He said he didn't think it was a factor in the vote against him though. "People in general know that I don't do any selling out. The reason we endorsed Copeland was that we had a conference with Copeland and he said he liked the way things have progressed. Insofar as opportunities are concerned, he would be willing to work with them and try to keep the thing moving in the direction that it was moving. He talked the way we wanted him to talk. Therefore we endorsed him.

"We did not endorse Mercer because Mercer was going in the opposition direction. Mercer ain't for all this. If he came out and told you the truth, he's not for all that's happening. He's not for each man getting that which is due him.

"I've had run-ins with him. I was in city hall one morning talking about this public accommodations thing. People are traveling these roads. As a result, CORE and SNCC and everybody else comes through here, and they go to these hotels and if it's not open, they're going to make

a mess out of it. I said, 'Now Doctor, why don't we call all these hotel managers and sit down and let's see if we can't work out something?' He just blew up, you see. He didn't even want to talk about it. He didn't want to work it out. Anybody's got a closed mind, he'll mess up your town. He's a good talker. Good talker. You got to watch him though."

Of federal civil rights legislation, which was at that time pending, he said: "When that comes through, we are going to move head-on, you see. What the law says do, we want the law observed." What did he mean by head-on? "We will never forget the channels. When I say head-on, we are going through negotiations, try to work it out." But it will help to "have the law directly behind the situation. Just like when we went to the hospital the other day. We went to negotiate, and if they had said they were not going to do it, then the next day we would have had a suit. The next day."

"I think I'll put in a plug for the police department," he said. "Chief Rex Deaver has been very helpful. At the beginning of the movement, I went and talked to him to let him know I was not a rabblerouser or trouble-maker. I let him know just what I was planning to do. Any time that negotiations bogged down, he always knew what might happen.

Everything we've done, he has known about it, even when we went to the lunch counters and recreation facilities. He's been straight down the line with me. I've been straight down the line with him."

Summing up the NAACP work in Brunswick, the Rev. Mr. Hope said everything was done locally, all decisions made by the local branch, with the executive board directing things. "The only time we go to the state office is for legal help."

As for the future, he said he was optimistic. "I don't see any problems. We will continue to try to reason these problems out together and try to work for the advancement and the betterment of our community, our state, our world."

Is Brunswick essentially any different from other southern communities where race relations progress is needed? "I don't think Brunswick's so much different," said the Rev. Julius Ceasar Hope. "I think it's the strategy that has been used. I think likewise Albany, Little Rock, Mississippi, and all those places helped here. In order for it not to happen here, we sit down and try to work it out. I don't think Brunswick is any different. I think the strategy is."

THE COMMITTEE

With the Biracial Committee's penchant for secrecy and anonymity, its members were understandably the most reluctant of all to be interviewed. Finally, one white member, on agreement that his name not be used, indicated a willingness to talk of the thought and philosophy behind the committee. It is important to say that this thought and philosophy were born in Brunswick, grew out of the myriad intertwinings -- like the marshes of Glynn -- of its Deep South, small city life, showing that amid all the intertwinings, the best of moral and intellectual truth still runs true and strong and can emerge to sustain a people.

The committee, said the member, has been in existence five years "in an unknown and uncharted field." It has regularly scheduled meetings, once a month. There is no permanent chairman. The chairmanship revolves down the alphabet for the six Negro and six white members. The

committee has never issued a press release, and members never divulge what takes place at a meeting. For a long time, its membership was secret, and is not now well known. The committee has no official public responsibilities, and members are not appointed by public officials. Its services have been sought, its advice requested by all public bodies, including the city and county governments, the merchants association, and the board of education.

"In the end, they take action, not us."

It has dealt with "the usual problems" involving "removal of (I don't like to say integration or segregation) social and economic barriers, and the recognition of civil rights." There has never been a committee decision that was not unanimous, an agreed-on order of social change. As long as there is progress, there is cooperation. When the NAACP boycott deadline on the jobs issue fell in the midst of a low employment period, "colored members" of the committee sided with whites seeking deferment.

The hospital walkout was not a racial issue "because they say so." But all involved were Negro, in the lowest job classifications. The biracial committee was called in, and got them to go back to work. The matter was not then settled. They were told, "We can

promise you nothing. But disease takes no holiday. You can't shut down a hospital like a steel mill." They were urged to go back and give a reasonable time to work things out. "It's still with us. We go from crisis to crisis."

Brunswick has its share of hotheads, anonymous letter writers and the like. Any race has its fine people and its sorry ones, he said. The Glynn Society haven't been heard from since the school thing. "Radicals of either race are not the best people."

He discussed the economic increases made by Negroes since World War II. But economic development means that soon there will be no place for the untrained. It's cheaper for society to train people than support them for life. "If we don't prepare people for life, we will pay 100 times the cost. We are going to make illiteracy and lack of preparation for life a personal choice, a disgrace to the individual and not the society." Economics is the main concern of Negro members of the biracial committee: "a chance for their kids."

He said he had learned a lot during the five years he had spent on the committee, and had "a devil of a lot more to learn." But he did know that if every Negro made $100 a week, business would sell twice as much. You

can't do that with everybody mad, and throwing rocks and hauling people off to jail.

If there is any problem involving race, the committee will know about it. Such a committee is an essential for any city. "We can do what the politicians can't. Nobody solves anything without looking at it, playing ostrich." If Jacksonville had this, it wouldn't have had its riots of the spring of 1964. "I know our problems haven't all been solved, but we are facing them. We haven't failed in any crisis. We will soon turn a corner and be going down hill."

How did the committee come to be formed? He said the answer goes back to the first days after World War II, when, overnight, a big shipbuilding industry in Brunswick ended, with 16,000 people out of work and leaving. Brunswick's population dropped drastically. It had been up to 40,000. It was a disaster. "We had to build a community back. Adversity like this builds leadership and community spirit." As the effort to rebuild Brunswick was becoming successful, the South's racial revolution of the 1950's started up. The team meeting on other problems saw Little Rock and other disasters and felt it must cope with the problem locally. The Chamber of Commerce agreed to set up the committee.

Then, quietly, he spoke of the "international" meanings of Brunswick: "People must live with people if

the world is to have order. If democracy will not work in Brunswick, it will not work in the nation, it will not work in the world. People must live with people. We have moved from the Civil War to an age when a button can be pushed that will blow up a nation. We must learn to live with each other."

A Negro member of the committee also talked briefly about its role. He said it had been difficult to get Negroes willing to serve.

He described how frank and free discussion is on the committee. "We can call each other liars."

He said that if the economic problems could be solved, people would work out the social ones. "There is not much desire for a connection with the white man or his white woman but there is for being financially able. I was born and raised according to southern customs. I never felt white citizens were superior to me. But it was apparent what I didn't have. I have reached the conclusion that the way one conducts himself, one indivudual to another, the individual can reach what he wants, regardless of race."

But Negroes are a long way from being treated as first class citizens, he said. Some white people never associate with Negroes, never give race a thought.

Getting representation in government will help. "And with good white people, we can put over our problems, with people who understand the problems." Then, he said: "The Negro isn't what he was years ago. Kids are not born with the same instinct. Maybe it's something intended. They are born different. Maybe it's just better environment, better training. We do more for our kids than they used to.

"The Negro doesn't feel the white man as he once did. I don't know if the white man has changed. Maybe he has; maybe he doesn"t feel as great as he used to."

He looked down a quiet neighborhood's row of yards, with toys in many of them, and children playing. "Our kids," he repeated, wonderingly, "are different now."

THE COUNCIL ON HUMAN RELATIONS

Radio Station WMOG, in March, 1964, devoted one of its day's fares of editorials to a flinging of the gauntlet at the Glynn County Council on Human Relations. The same editorial was, as is customary, repeated throughout the day with heroic trumpet calls and in a tone of voice masterfully mixing self-righteous offended dignity and oratorical pompousness.

"The Glynn Council on Human Relations... doesn't agree with our editorial policy," the thing began and went on to tell of how the council had complained to the Federal Communications Commission about the station. The editorial named the officers of the council, stressing Negro names, and telling when and where the little group meets. "In disagreeing with our editorial policy, the council is not alone," the metallic voice of the station went on, in a demonstration of the

kind of irresponsibility the council had complained about. "Ralph McGill and the Atlanta newspapers disagree. So does the NAACP, CORE, the Communist Party and Martin Luther King, Jr. ..."

In a final flourish, the announcer said slowly: "In effect the Glynn Council on Human Relations has squared off to battle it out with Johnny Reb Radio ... We didn't ask for the fight ... But we accept the challenge ... We promise we will not retreat ..."

The station is one of a string owned by Allan Woodall, a middle-Georgia businessman, who is a minor but affluent operator in state segregationist political circles. Albany has one of the stations. Their trademark is a drawing of a brutalized Confederate soldier, reminiscent of German art of the 1930's and resembling a storm trooper.

The council, a group of about 30 genteel local people, mostly middle-aged and older, seemed generally unperturbed by the ultimatum. The general attitude seemed summed up by a beach-tanned lady of the island who called the station and asked if each member could have equal time to reply to the editorial's "hogwash." Previously, the group had had the station's owner, who has a vacation home

on Jekyll Island, as a speaker to rebut the FCC complaint. The complaint was concerned with such things as the station's use of the word "nigger" in advertisements against the school desegregation.

Mr. Rogers, the council co-chairman, only recently took over the job. He and Mrs. Rogers praised the work of the previous chairman, Mrs. Emmet Johnson, who worked actively in behalf of the early breakthroughs. She and her missionary husband have moved on to Africa. The Rogers live on St. Simons; he is a retired chemical engineer, having lost both arms in an industrial explosion. He uses prosthetic arms with such skill that one doesn't notice it. A middle-aged couple for whom the words jolly and at the same time earnest seem unavoidable, they laughed at the editorial, but also gave serious thought to whether to reply, deciding finally against it.

They told of the council's participation in the racial breakthroughs. It was formed about the same time the breakthroughs occurred. The Rogers became members a little later. They began with the story of school desegregation.

"Hope went to the school board and Biracial Committee a month without ever threatening a suit or demonstration," Mr. Rogers related. Finally the Biracial

Committee unanimously adopted a motion that it would write a letter to the school board asking that steps be taken. The Negroes then heard nothing for another month. The Council on Human Relations finally wrote a letter to the Biracial Committee asking results. It never got an official reply, but after the Council's letter, the Biracial Committee finally wrote the school board. This got prompt action, the announcement that the school board had decided to accept Negro students.

Then the council worked as it could to make desegregation a success, including smoothing some of the personal adjustments of students. Mrs. Rogers said every time the council got a complaint, "we had to make about ten telephone calls." When they <u>really</u> made calls, Mr. Rogers said, was when they heard about the suit attacking the desegregation plan. Mrs. Wilkes, who is ever alert, told them the night before it was to be filed, and they called the city attorney; he was grateful; he didn't even know about it. The council helped rally local support of the school board. It also investigated the background of the litigants and concluded, Mr. Rogers said, "these people never would have on their own initiated the suit. It was apparent that these people were used." Only one local lawyer was involved and he

was a minor cog. Most of the litigants lived in an area that bordered on a Negro neighborhood.

The Rogers told also of the council's observing for possible trouble that never came at the lunch counter and park desegregations. Did they advise the Rev. Mr. Hope in any of the many wise and canny moves he had made? "He might ask an opinion of what we think, and we tell him," said Mr. Rogers. "Rev. Hope has done a wonderful job, and he's pretty generally accepted now by the white leadership as a responsible man. A lot of them say they'd hate to see Hope leave here because they'd hate to deal with a new man."

(The Council on Human Relations, the Rev. Mr. Hope had said, had been very helpful. "They have been giving us all the help that they could from the position that they hold. I think they've done a very excellent job.")

Mr. Rogers described current work of council members, calling on industries asking about open hiring. He said he went to the area union representatives, and was assured AFL-CIO national policies are adhered to. The union was then running two schools, one a school for carpentry in which there were no Negroes; in fact, there

were no Negroes in the carpenter's union. "They said they have no applications." Mr. Rogers said he also went to Brunswick Pulp and Paper Company, partly owned by Scott Paper Company. "I know they were told you can open up your job opportunities and hire on an equal basis or Scott Paper Company is going to lose some government contracts." They have Negroes in skilled jobs in the plant, but when a company spokesman was asked about office personnel, "he changed the subject. I don't know whether it was purposely done."

Other council members went to other industries, including Hercules Powder, Bestwall, and Babcock and Wilcox. There was no question of their right to do so; in some cases the plant managers sat in on the interviews. "We were pretty well satisfied that the big industries here are fair about it. But there again, they get very few opportunities. You see there are very few Negroes in this area qualified as mechanics or engineers."

The Council on Human Relations brings together whites and Negroes concerned not only with their communities but with their selves, concerned not only with orderly desegregation but with adventuring into what is for all Southerners the new life of an integrated society. The sort of human hurts and personality defenses, and attempts to rescue personality, which underlie all the public and

practical problems of southern race relations can be sensed through the words of some council members. Mrs. Rogers, for example, saying with a smile:

"There are certain things to overcome. Certain things that all my life I've been accustomed to. I've always said colored. I can't say Nee-grow. I can't pronounce it. Another thing is, all my life it's been a colored woman and a white lady. Now isn't that a silly thing! But I catch myself. I don't feel that way in my heart. I asked Mrs. Wilkes point blank, I said, 'Mrs. Wilkes do colored people object to being called colored people? And she said no ..."

"You can run into a lot of things innate that you say and do that you -- I guess it's wrong, but I think if you have to be on your p's and q's and make yourself formal and not be natural -- If I can't be natural, I can't do anything."

Or an older Negro gentleman, rugged in the individuality of his opinion, not a council member but one of the Rev. Mr. Hope's staunch supporters: "Me'n these people came through the depression together. My hog meat raised 'em all. I'm not prejudiced against anybody. The old stock of Glynn County have a fine reputation between the races. Any prejudice that's here has seeped in."

Or there are Dr. and Mrs. Ray (he is the Negro

general practitioner), newcomers to the Brunswick area. He was born in Mississippi, educated at Fisk University and a California medical school. She is a native New Yorker with a master's degree in psychology. They live on St. Simons in a pleasant brick house with a neatly tended grass yard that fronts onto a road of rutted sand.

"We arrived in March /of 1962/ and the Council on Human Relations started in April," Mrs. Ray said. "So we've participated in about everything it has done." She is a member of the council's executive committee; he attends occasionally but is not a member. The Mississippi born and raised Dr. Ray said:

> I'm not a part of it. It seems like they're not doing anything. It seems like there are a few people who really want to. But in the main it's a place where they get together and drink a little tea and eat a few cookies you see and that's about all you do. You don't want to hurt anybody's feelings. And you don't want to change too much. And there may be a group in there who may want to find out what you are thinking, in case you did start to think. That sort of a thing. Now I may be wrong because I haven't attended. It may be that it's just careful. It's not powerful as yet.
>
> And it is one of the things that made me feel good about coming to a small southern town like this.

Or Mr. Rogers:

When I was in the service, and we were coming home from Japan, the fellows on the boat, the group I was with, possibly 150 to 200 men, about 40 or 50% of them were Negroes. Well they put us on the boat in Japan, and as you know you're stacked up about four high. I crawled in my bunk. Eighteen inches above in his bunk was a Negro, and 18 inches below was another Negro. Across in that bunk was another Negro. Now this was true throughout the whole troopship. There was not one incident of any trouble on that ship the whole way over. When we got on the train coming from California, we got in the Pullman. There would be a Negro in the lower and a white in the upper. We came all the way across the country. We pulled into Augusta, Georgia. We got off the train. They said Negro troops on this bus, white troops on this bus. And there was a Negro man who was rather indignant. He said, "What the hell does he mean Negro troops?" And this other little short Negro says, "Man, don't you know where you is?" He says, "You in Georgia."

This struck me right then. Here all the way across an ocean, all the way across the country, we had ridden side by side, we had eaten at the same table, we had stood in the same line, we bathed in the same shower, and there was not one case of any trouble. But when we get to Georgia -- Negroes here, whites there.

LATER

Enactment of the civil rights law overturned many of the situations and assumptions implicit in the interviews of Spring 1964. For example, at that time there was concern about whether the federal court ruling on desegregation of Jekyll Island would include motels, restaurants, etc. leased to private operators. With the passage of the law, the question may have become moot.

Many of the goals of the Brunswick Negro movement, elusive after two years of negotiation, were obtained overnight. Indeed, there were overnight at least as many gains in desegregation of public accommodations as there had been during all the long period of negotiated agreements of which Brunswhick was so proud.

Virtually all restaurants in the city and at Jekyll Island complied with the new law. According

to the Rev. Mr. Hope, of the NAACP, a small place across from the court house refused to serve Negroes, and another place charged $6.00 for scrambled eggs. Both will be taken to court, he said. Another, the Salad Bowl, proclaimed itself a private club, its owner, R. L. Holtzendorf, emerging as something of a leader of newly invigorated segregationist ferment.

Hotels and motels also complied. The Rev. Mr. Hope said all the leading ones, including those on Jekyll, had been tested. Theaters complied.

But when 15 or 16 youths showed up at a white city swimming pool, it was closed, and subsequently all city and county pools were closed. Mayor Mercer, true to his word, apparently was instrumental in this. The Negro youngsters were not acting as part of the NAACP or the Negro movement, but on their own. Mr. Lovvern, the city manager, said the pool they picked was the worst possible one, located in a neighborhood of newly militant segregationists. Mayor Mercer said there had been agreement through the Biracial Committee to leave the pools alone this summer, and declare the beaches ("God's good pool out yonder") open. But "now we can't deal with responsible Negroes -- we have to deal with people demanding rights." The civil rights law, he said, "made our problems ten times more difficult. There's nothing to do but just see things get worse."

Mrs. Wilkes said she was upset about the pools; her youngsters love to swim. She wondered why Negroes weren't pushing harder to get them re-opened, and said the Negro members on the Biracial Committee were old and had forgotten the problems of keeping children entertained in in the summer. The Rev. Mr. Hope said a suit would be entered to re-open the pools, that there is precedent for it.

The danger of violence was cited as a reason for closing them. The closing came during a series of tense events in which this same danger was cited often.

Part of the buildup of the mood was a "hurricane alert" of National Guardsmen in the area. Mayor Mercer was particularly critical of all the "kids with bayonets" running around "armed to the teeth." He said many people thought they had something to do with enforcement of the new civil rights law. Major General George Hearn, state adjutant general, said that of course it was nothing of the kind, but merely a routine training project. Its purpose was to see how long it would take to mobilize the guard if it were needed in the wake of a hurricane, such as often occurs on the coast. The test was centered on Savannah, and involved men in Atlanta and Elberton as well as Brunswick. He said the mayor had gotten "perturbed" because he hadn't been told about the thing in advance, and that he had agreed to alert him in the future -- though, strictly speaking, any advance

notification could hurt the purity of the test. (The guard was called out in earnest in September when Brunswick suffered the worst damages in decades from a hurricane.)

After the practice alert came a squabble over arch-segregationist Governor George Wallace of Alabama speaking in the area. He had been invited to address the Georgia Seedmen's Convention in session at Jekyll Island. But at the last minute, the Jekyll Island Authority refused him use of the island Aquarama on grounds that it would endanger public safety. There was much local criticism of this, including charges that it was another incident of bad blood politically between Mr. Wallace and Georgia Governor Carl Sanders.

A. J. Hartley of the Authority, known in the way of Georgia politics (of which he is a long-time and respected veteran) as "Judge," is the resident director at the state-owned island. He said the governor had nothing to do with the decision. He said he made it himself because of such things as the fact that the seedmen were giving out guest tickets to local people; the NAACP had asked for permits for 100 pickets of the meeting; Alabama "security agents" had come in, saying they were there to "protect" the governor; violence had broken out at a Wallace rally a few days before in Atlanta; several cars with Florida tags were around with ax handles in them; and a newly organized Glynn County Citizens Council had

offered help in maintaining order. All of this convinced him, he said, that the Wallace appearance might endanger life and property, and he had a lot of little children and women to be responsible for on the island, not to mention its tourist reputation.

An attempt by the seedmen to use the National Guard Armory in Brunswick for the speech was also unsuccessful. General Hearn said he merely quoted the state law to them that armories were not to be used for political purposes. Governor Wallace finally cancelled the speech. Local criticism made the point that both Governor Sanders and former Governor Marvin Griffin used the armory to kick off their last campaigns for governor.

Mayor Mercer was among those publicly critical of Wallace's being barred from the two speaking sites. His position was that the Alabaman had a right to speak, although he wouldn't invite him or introduce him.

But when the Citizens Council followed with announcement of a program featuring some of Georgia's extreme segregationists, Roy Harris, Lester Maddox, and former Governor Griffin, the mayor called a 7 a.m. breakfast of prominent white leaders, including presidents of all organization. He urged that the Citizens Council meeting be postponed because of tension. He had drafted a strong statement; the group adopted a milder one, and he said he

felt let down. But, he said, and others confirmed it, the leaders subsequently got on their phones and acted to calm things down.

The NAACP, meanwhile, had let it be known that it would picket the meeting. There was genuine concern about this among supporters of the movement, including Mr. Rogers and Dr. Wilkes. Dr. Wilkes said he called the Rev. Mr. Hope and told him he had gone along with everything, but he couldn't go along with this. It might mean violence and would prove nothing.

The Rev. Mr. Hope said the NAACP decided not to picket when it became known that only Mr. Griffin would show up. The final decision wasn't made though until 6 p.m. of the evening he spoke. "We looked at what we would be picketing. Wallace represented something, but Griffin is a has-been. We'd have only given publicity to their meeting."

The emergence of the Citizens Council and a local Ku Klux Klan were upshots of the tension and controversy and of the summer's mood of extremism. Mr. Lovvern and others said the Citizens Council included the Glynn Society, but it had picked up some substantial citizens. About a thousand people attended the Griffin rally, and a sizeable collection was taken up. Subsequently, ads were run in the Brunswick News, drumming

up membership and setting forth goals. The newspaper gave full news coverage to the activities.

In a statement of "policy belief and aims," one ad said the Citizens Council is "dedicated to the restoration of states rights and curtailment of spreading 'big government.'" It listed freedoms it is for, including freedom of association, and "this does mean racial segregation." An application card for membership stated goals more bluntly: "No compromise" on segregation. Integration means miscegenation. Communist influence is behind integration. "Do something," the card said in big letters, "positive," in smaller ones. Dues were set out on the card as $2, $5, or $10 a month.

Mr. Lovvern said the Klan had met three times on nearby Blythe Island. There were indications of overlapping membership and even leadership of the Klan and the Citizens Council.

Mayor Mercer had been criticized by the NAACP on grounds that he was inconsistent about tension, harking to it on the Griffin and hurricane alert situations, but not on the Wallace speech. He had been criticized by segregationists for using the term "extremist" in connection with the Citizens Council rally.

The Rev. Mr. Hope made the point that all the time there had been agreement among whites on the

desirability of the Negroes keeping "outsiders" away from Brunswick, but great community support (including Chamber of Commerce and Junior Chamber of Commerce resolutions) of the right of outsider Wallace to speak. He also criticized the mayor and council for not urging compliance with the civil rights law.

The Rev. Mr. Hope seemed not too bothered by the Klan and Citizens Council. They have been in Brunswick all along, he said. "Wallace just gave them something to talk about to get members."

Mayor Mercer, still speaking of the desirability of taking 100 Negroes and 100 whites and dropping them "16 miles out to sea," said that the civil rights law and the Wallace incident had allowed six extremist groups which couldn't previously get together to jell into one. He claimed that in all that had happened, he had demonstrated his ability to say no to both the ones who wanted to go 75 miles per hour and those who wanted to go in reverse. Dr. Wilkes and the Rev. Mr. Hope said he and other officials should take a stand against the Citizens Council. Mayor Mercer said he was encouraging decent people who had joined, but found it distasteful, to stay in and keep in "moderate."

In the moist tropical heat, other things had been working themselves out. Carolyn Harris went to the Math club banquet, in the dining room of a big downtown motel, taking

a Negro youth, one of those who also desegregated the high school, as her escort, and had a good time. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare sent investigators down to look into the hospital situation. There was some suggestion that funds would be tied up, but apparently everything was worked out in the Biracial Committee.

Mrs. Wilkes had her baby, a little girl, Aundrea. She was admitted to the white maternity section, but only after a dismaying episode. Dr. Wilkes said that during the period when they had been told that the baby might arrive any time, their doctor received a letter (hand-delivered) from the hospital superintendent saying that the hospital authority had found regulations which prevented honoring Mrs. Wilkes' reservation in the white maternity section.

Mrs. Wilkes wrote to the Rev. Mr. Nalls saying that the letter, coming at the time it did, had made her "frustrated to the point of utter despair." It said that she was suffering "humiliating debasement and mental anguish at a time I should not be." She would be "chagrined if I am forced to seek care outside the state." What, the letter ended, would each authority member feel if it were his wife so treated?

The Rev. Mr. Nalls was "just wonderful," Mrs. Wilkes said. He called the authority together and rescinded

the action, and everyone treated her "very, very nice" in the white maternity section. Beyond that, Mrs. Wilkes has as a result of the experience yet another communication from a white person to treasure, this one a letter to Dr. Wilkes from a white man, a citizen of Brunswick they didn't know and had never even heard of. He was a patient at the hospital when the baby was born. The letter said:

> Rumors have been flying around this hospital about the possibility of insurrection and riot in the third floor ward when your baby arrived. I understand that one of the babies was organizing a Klan Chapter and in protest would wear diapers designed like the Confederate flag.
>
> It was with considerable apprehension that I lelt the comparative safety of the 2nd floor and went up to the turbulent third when they displayed the babies.
>
> The first amazing thing I say was that no babies wore side arms; there was no evidence of their throwing baby bottles at each other; the neighbors on either side of your lovely child seemed totally unconcerned over the fact that their skins differ slightly in color. There were no bi-racial committees in session; they did have a couple of soap box orators -- but their topic of debate did not concern racial problems. The most amazing thing was the fact that all eating, rest rooms and other facilities were completely integrated. Isn't it amazing how distorted stories become? I wonder if we all shouldn't get smart like the babies?

Dr. Wilkes, who is building a home on Jekyll Island, said he was proud that a child of his was born in Georgia. "Regardless of all that has happened, I'm still proud of the community."

The Rev. Mr. Hope did go to see Mayor Mercer; and they had a talk. Neither, telling of it, seemed impressed with results.

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled on the NAACP request to desegregate all schools. It said that in the fall of 1964, the ninth through twelfth grades had to be desegregated. Some 24 applicants from Negro students to transfer to white schools had been received by early August. Nineteen were finally accepted. Four Negroes had been accepted by midsummer as students in the new junior college which was to open in the fall.

Voter registration had remained a priority project, with good results. The Rev.Mr. Hope said that by midsummer, approximately 4,000 to 6,000 eligible Negroes had registered in the city, and another 4,000 of an eligible 7,500 in the county.

The efforts to get jobs for Negroes had been at least partially successful, but had also involved picketing by the NAACP, the first time any kind of demonstration has been resorted to in Brunswick, "Somebody said that ruined the record," said the Rev. Mr. Hope. "We're not

interested in a record -- we're interested in results."

The Rev. Mr. Hope said that the negotiations through the Biracial Committee resulted in "ten or fifteen" Negroes getting jobs as clerks and cashiers in downtown stores. But negotiations, while successful with some grocery stores, broke down with others. These are stores in the Negro district with predominantly Negro trade, the Rev. Mr. Hope said. He sent pickets to two of them on a weekend at the end of July, and went on the radio to say that there had been efforts for two years to reason with the owners "with no tangible results." He urged Negroes not to buy at stores that wouldn't hire Negroes.

After the weekend of picketing, the two stores agreed to hire Negroes, and a third store did so, too. The Rev. Mr. Hope said there were others, and that systematically, two at a time, they would be picketed, with efforts for a tight boycott. At a mass meeting (where the congregation sang "We Shall Overcome" in its original hymn version), movement followers asked detailed questions on exactly what was and what wasn't legal activity in such campaign.

Mayor Mercer took a dim view of the campaign, saying that in some cases store owners who didn't employ cashiers (but worked the cash register themselves) were being forced to hire them. The Rev. Mr. Hope said energies would be concentrated on jobs "for months to come." Statistics of

Negro buying power and patterns, were being developed, and demands for jobs would be made on all businesses with a high percentage of Negro patronage, including, he said, insurance agencies. "We will try to do it through reasoning, but when reasoning won't work, we'll do it with a picket line."

On a warm summer afternoon, Jekyll Island beach, once the private playground of a few millionaires, and further back in history touched by the slave trade, was desegregated for the first time. A little group of white vacationers sat about in the shade at the public bathhouse next to the Aquarama; a state patrol car sat unobstrusively in the parking lot; a car driven by the Rev. Mr. Hope pulled up, and seven young Negro men and women got out. They paid their fees and went into the state-owned locker rooms (reporting later that in both the men's and women's, a nice word was said by people who happened to be in them), and emerged in bathing suits. As the Rev. Mr. Hope watched from the cement walkway, a slim erect, lonely figure, they walked down to the beach, little Julian pulling away from his daddy to join them, running and jumping on the beach.

They swam for about an hour, staying together -- between, but not very near, groups of white swimmers. A man with a northern twang said, "Aw look at that.

They'll ruin it." But he and his wife and children went waddling on down to the water. A young man at the bath-house said to his wife, with obvious approval: "See. They're desegregating the beach. This is the first time." The swimmers and Julian romped and splashed.

There were no incidents, no ugly words even. Judge Hartley, who had been warned in advance and probably had employees out watching, said the same thing had been true of other desegregation at the resort. A few residents provately complained; one man had an axe handle with lead in the end of it which he called his "nigger stick," but Negroes weren't hampered in enjoyment of facilities, including the golf course.

Later, the Rev. Mr. Hope's NAACP held its annual dinner at the island's Aquarama, another first. Some 900 persons, including Mr. and Mrs. Rogers, Mrs. Frances Pauley, director of the Georgia Council on Human Relations, a white attorney from Savannah, Mr. Mauney, representing Mr. Lovvern, and one or two other white persons, attended. Tough looking whites stood about the entranceway, but police were there in force, and looked like they meant business. A number of other white persons, apparently merely curious, drove by staring. The Rev. Mr. Hope read off the names of white politicians who had been invited, and their excuses. But for the most part, it was an evening of quiet celebration and happiness, the theme of it expressed in a speech which

recalled that the Wanderer, the last slave ship to operate on the American coast, had been captured at Jekyll Island (a huge iron cooking vat from which slaves were fed commemorates the event at a historical marker), and now descendants of slaves were, at the meeting, enjoying one more symbolic mark of emerging status as first-class citizens. Continued efforts toward full attainment of that status were pledged.

So the myriad affairs of Brunswick, above and below the surface, continued. Mr. Lovvern, among other white leaders, said communication is not as good as before between the races. The Rev. Mr. Hope no longer comes to talk to him, after a dispute between them about the NAACP request for picket permits. The Rev. Mr. Hope now talks with the police chief, knowing that the police chief relays the information to Mr. Lovvern. One knowledgeable observer said he thought the time had come for the Biracial Committee to broaden its base, get more representative members, and quit being so secretive.

The integration in the city for the most part remained a strangely formal sort of thing -- Negroes in a group ritualistically using previously all-white facilities. No white person goes along with them to swim at Jekyll, or to dine at a fancy motel restaurant. Even among people of both races most dedicated to the equal society, there is

little interracial visiting. The meetings of the Glynn County Council on Human Relations and, ironically, of the Biracial Committee remain virtually the only outlets for biracial communication that is anywhere near normal.

Mayor Mercer, talking now of a plan dependent upon Negro business investment that would clear up 50% of slums in five years, said almost gloomily, "Good solid things come painful and slow. Revolutions never get what they set out for. The average Negro is losing out."

The Rev. Mr. Hope, in his quick, energetic way, said things would continue getting better in Brunswick, that there might be setbacks, but "truth crushed to earth rises again."

"We are going to win," he said, his voice dropping, his face abstract, almost as though he were telling himself this. "I don't worry abot that, see. Because, you see, we've got to win. What we are for has got to win. What we are for, the ideas, the things we're after -- they're <u>right</u>. What is right is not going to lose."